

Good Evening, Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Bill Meyerson and I live in Hamden. I'm an adjunct history professor at Middlesex Community College.

I am a member of 4Cs - the union representing FT and PT faculty and staff across our 12 community colleges and adjunct faculty at the University of Hartford. My union is also a member of the Recovery for All coalition.

I am testifying today to urge you to increase the block grant to the CSCU system to improve educational services for our students and address long-standing inequities in our CSCU workforce, specifically regarding adjunct faculty.

There are numerous challenges facing adjuncts, which at community college represent a full 75% of faculty. Those challenges include,

- no guarantee of employment from semester to semester (which has happened to me this semester and two other times in my ten years of adjunct teaching),
- cobbling together adjunct positions wherever they can be found to make ends meet,
- an inability to secure available full-time employment,
- and the inability to participate in department meetings and shared governance that is critical to college and student academic success.

And according to a recent survey of CSCU adjuncts, those who are dependent on their adjunct contracts to support their families are more likely to be women and people of color.

High on the list of hardships is the lack of healthcare benefits. The same survey found that over the last three years nearly 90% have applied for or are covered under government healthcare benefits and 20% utilize SNAP food benefits.

Adjunct faculty are as skilled and committed as our full-time colleagues, yet the precarious nature of adjunct teaching and hardships and stress associated with poor working conditions has an impact on the academic success of both students and the colleges.

It's often said that the teacher's working conditions are the student's learning conditions. The precarity of adjunct teaching is matched by the precarity that our multi-racial majority working class and immigrant students face and the challenges and barriers they must overcome to get their college education.

Our state faces a multibillion-dollar surplus and an overflowing Rainy Day Fund, while our wealthiest corporations and residents are prospering. At the same time, working class students and part-time faculty and staff are paying the price of disinvestment in our public education system.

The state can begin to correct this equity imbalance by ensuring funding for healthcare for adjunct faculty and a pathway to full-time permanent employment. Thank you.